

VZCZCXRO6363
PP RUEHDBU RUEHPW
DE RUEHBUL #0685 0810635
ZNY SSSSS ZZH
P 220635Z MAR 09
FM AMEMBASSY KABUL
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7869
INFO RUCNAFG/AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

S E C R E T KABUL 000685

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR PM-RSAT

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/22/2019
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [AFIN](#) [MOPS](#)
SUBJECT: AFGHANISTAN: POST ASSESSMENT ON RELEASE OF NIGHT
VISION DEVICES

Classified By: Ambassador William Wood for reasons 1.4(B) and (D))

[1](#)1. (U) This is an action request) see paragraph 2.

[1](#)2. (C) SUMMARY: Post recommends the immediate release of Night Vision Devices (NVDs), specifically 2,410 pairs of American Technologies Network Corporation,s ATN NVG7-21 and ATN NVG70CGTI from case B6-B-AAK to the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA). The Generation 2 System will be used by the Afghan National Army (ANA) Commando Battalions to advance night time operational effectiveness while reducing collateral damage risk. USG funding for this equipment is estimated at \$3,283,290 through a Title 22 funded Foreign Military Sales case. Post also requests post-issuance clearance on an additional 1,076 NVDs (case 837 E3-B-UCA and case 239 AF-B-UBF donated by the British) that have already been issued to the commandos without a country team assessment. A review of accountability reports shows a marginal .03 percent rate of lost or stolen NVDs provided by the U.S. Department of Defense to the Afghan National Army Commandos. Post believes this low rate provides strong justification for release of additional NVDs at this time. This cable will evaluate the merits of the transfer request.

Justification of GIROA Need and U.S. Interests

[1](#)3. (SBU) U.S. Special Forces are increasingly conducting joint operations with Afghan Commandos, and 50 percent of these operations are conducted at night, providing a strong justification for transfer of NVDs. CSTC-A has reports of 8 NVDs that have gone missing, and one that was reported stolen since we began issuing NVDs to the commandos in July 2007. That amounts to an NVD lost or stolen percentage of only .03 percent, compared to a 1 percent rate by U.S. Special Forces.

Afghanistan Safeguarding of Sensitive Technology

[1](#)4. (SBU) We obtain all necessary formal agreements with the GIROA before transferring any sensitive equipment or technology. The Afghan Ministry of National Defense signed an NVD Compliance Plan in June 2008, stating the GIROA,s intent to provide these items with the same degree of security as the U.S. would provide. While ongoing U.S. mentorship has helped ensure a low rate of lost or stolen NVDs, Post notes that GIROA does need mentorship support in the reporting and investigations procedures that follow the disappearance of an NVD. Post does not believe this issue is serious enough to warrant restriction of NVD transfer at this time. Rather, we believe such mentorship will help ensure that the rate of lost and stolen NVDs remains low in the future. Post will elaborate on this issue in a follow-on cable.

Regional Balance

[1](#)5. (SBU) We do not anticipate the release of these NVDs to GIROA will adversely affect the regional balance of power or cause negative reactions from neighboring nations. On the

contrary, NVD use helps the ANA Commandos carry out operations that in the long run are geared to help promote stability in the region. There is no significant economic impact anticipated from this sale.

Relevant Human Rights Considerations

¶6. (SBU) There are no human rights considerations that should preclude the release of defense equipment to the GIROA.

Training

¶7. (SBU) Training would be provided by U.S. personnel already in country; additional U.S. presence for that purpose is not needed.

Post Recommendation

¶8. (SBU) Post recommends the release of 2,410 pairs of ATN NVG7-21 and ATN NVG70CGTI to the ANA Commando Battalions. Post also recommends post-issuance clearance on an additional 1,076 NVDs that have already been issued to the Afghan commandos.

WOOD